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Report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1344 (2001) of 15 March 2001, which extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) until 15 September 2001. The report contains an update on political, humanitarian and human rights developments, as well as on the deployment and activities of UNMEE since my report of 19 June 2001 (S/2001/608). It also provides recommendations regarding the extension of the mandate of UNMEE.

II. Status of the Temporary Security Zone

Final map of the Temporary Security Zone

2. On 21 and 22 June 2001, UNMEE presented its final map of the Temporary Security Zone to the Eritrean and Ethiopian authorities, respectively. My Special Representative, Mr. Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, urged the parties to accept the map despite their objections to some parts of the boundary of the Zone as established by UNMEE.

3. Following the establishment of the final map of the Temporary Security Zone, Ethiopia stated that the map was unacceptable because of two "errors". It asserted that an 8-kilometre-wide pocket at the eastern end of Sector East should be returned to Ethiopia; and that the Zone should be uniformly 25 kilometres wide, which is not the case in Sector Centre, north of the Irob area. For its part, Eritrea has indicated that it could not accept the map as it was a departure from the proposals originally presented to the parties on 30 January 2001. In particular, the Eritrean authorities have indicated that the Zone could not be considered as "fully established" until their concerns regarding the southern boundary of the Zone had been addressed. However, while neither party has formally accepted the map, so far they have in fact based their operations on it, and have cooperated with UNMEE on the ground in the management of the Zone, in accordance with the parameters established in the map.

4. Despite the continued respect of the Temporary Security Zone by the parties, their disagreement over some parameters of the final map remains a source of concern. On several occasions, Eritrea invoked its disagreement with the southern boundary of the Zone in its refusal to cooperate on other issues related to the work of UNMEE. This position has delayed the resolution of a number of issues, including the restrictions on the freedom of movement of UNMEE in the northern areas adjacent to the Zone, the signing of the status-of-forces agreement, the convening of sector-level meetings of the Military Coordination Commission and the provision of information on the number of militia and police inside the Zone.

Presence of militia and police in the Temporary Security Zone

5. Despite repeated requests, Eritrea has not provided to UNMEE the information on the local militia and police inside the Temporary Security Zone necessary for the Mission to verify that the functions and configuration of the militia and police do not exceed those that prevailed before the outbreak of the conflict. Moreover, UNMEE has also not been able to determine whether the number of Eritrean police and militia already deployed to the Zone is commensurate with the size of the population of the Zone.

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6. Nevertheless, UNMEE estimates that approximately 6,800 Eritrean militia and 3,000 police are currently deployed inside the Temporary Security Zone. The estimated number of militia has risen since that indicated in my last report to the Security Council on 19 June 2001 (5,500), although the estimated number of police remains very close to the previous figure of 3,100 personnel.

7. My Special Representative and the Force Commander have repeatedly urged the Eritrean authorities not to deploy police and militia close to the southern boundary of the Zone. Nevertheless, on at least one occasion, their deployment too close to the southern boundary led to increased tensions between the parties in some sections of the boundary. In addition, UNMEE has recorded and protested several violations by the police and militia of the Protocol Agreement on the Presence of Police and Militia in the Temporary Security Zone, signed between UNMEE and Eritrea on 16 April 2001. In particular, the Eritrean militia and police have contravened the provisions of the Protocol relating to the type of weapons they are allowed to carry and to the stockpiling of weapons in the Zone. Despite these concerns, cooperation and communication between UNMEE and the police and militia at the field level have been relatively good. UNMEE continues to discuss with both parties smaller issues related to the presence of armed forces, police and militia on and around the southern boundary.

Freedom of movement of UNMEE

8. During the reporting period, UNMEE continued to experience restrictions on its freedom of movement. Eritrea has maintained its position that UNMEE should enjoy freedom of movement only within the Temporary Security Zone and main designated access routes to it, but not in the areas adjacent to the Zone. Such restrictions have hindered the ability of UNMEE to monitor the area north of the Zone where Eritrean Defence Forces are positioned. On a few occasions, the Mission's freedom of movement was restricted by the Ethiopian Armed Forces owing to insufficient coordination among some of their elements. It should be recalled that monitoring the redeployment and positions of the forces of the two countries is a key provision of the Mission's mandate in accordance with the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, signed by Ethiopia and Eritrea in Algiers on 18 June 2000 (S/2000/601, annex). All these issues have been repeatedly raised with the parties, including within the Military Coordination Commission.

Military Coordination Commission

9. At the seventh meeting of the Military Coordination Commission (MCC) held in Nairobi on 27 June 2001, the Commission discussed plans for the opening of the Mereb River Bridge, the current and future challenges faced by civilians returning to their homes and the freedom of movement of UNMEE. With regard to the format of MCC meetings, Eritrea continued to maintain that it was premature to hold sector MCCs until the Temporary Security Zone was "fully established", and its representative questioned the holding of future meetings of MCC either in Asmara or Addis Ababa. At the same time, the parties continued their discussions on a draft procedure for the collection and exchange of the remains of soldiers killed during the conflict.

10. The eighth meeting of the Commission, held in Nairobi on 8 August 2001, focused on confidence-building measures related to priority objectives set by the parties for the next six months, namely, border security and the return of internally displaced persons. UNMEE made several proposals, which the parties agreed to consider, in particular concerning a joint visit of their military authorities to UNMEE locations on both sides of the southern boundary of the Temporary Security Zone and the holding of meetings between village leaders on both sides of the southern boundary to discuss local issues of concern. The Commission also considered the possibility of holding its future meetings on the southern boundary or in UNMEE camps.

Deployment of UNMEE

11. On 5 July 2001, Brigadier General Peter Manyara (Kenya) arrived in the Mission area to assume his duties as Deputy Force Commander and Chief Military Observer. The military component of UNMEE is now widely deployed throughout the Mission area. The Mission's observation posts, combined with the daily patrols conducted by UNMEE Military Observers, ensure the monitoring of the Temporary Security Zone and its adjacent areas. As at 31 August, the strength of the military component of UNMEE stood at 3,870 military personnel from over 40 countries, including 3,655 troops and 215 military observers.

12. From 1 to 19 May, a number of one-day courses on "gender and peacekeeping" had been conducted in UNMEE as part of a Gender Awareness programme being developed for peacekeeping missions by the United Nations Secretariat. The training was provided by a gender specialist from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations together with the UNMEE training unit and human rights personnel. The course was delivered in three field locations — Assab, Adigrat and Barentu, as well as Addis Ababa and Asmara. The course was well received and gave rise to requests for further training. The course material has been subsequently integrated into induction courses delivered by the UNMEE training unit to newly deployed contingents.

III. Mine action

13. A positive step was the signature, on 27 August 2001, by the Government of Eritrea of the 1997 Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

14. As indicated in my last report, the Government of Eritrea has handed over 331 minefield records to UNMEE. The Government of Ethiopia has provided the Mission with 17 out of the 30 danger area records jointly compiled by the international non-governmental organization, the HALO Trust, and the Ethiopian Demining Project, which focused on the Ethiopian positions during the war. While Ethiopia has consistently stated that it does not possess centralized mine records, it agreed to facilitate an information collection project organized by the UNMEE Mine Action Coordination Centre in the three sectors. However, the project was tested in Sector East and found unsatisfactory, and UNMEE is urging the Ethiopian authorities to develop new procedures for the collection of relevant mine information from Ethiopian army engineers.

15. Landmines remain a major threat in the Temporary Security Zone and in areas adjacent to it. While the number of officially reported mine and unexploded ordnance incidents was lower than expected, particularly in view of the large number of internally displaced persons returning to the Zone in recent months, it still remains high. From 1 June to 31 August 2001, eight civilians were killed and 24 were injured in mine and unexploded ordnance incidents in the Zone and adjacent areas. On 18 August, eight Jordanian peacekeepers were injured after their water truck hit a mine in the western sector. The investigation carried out by UNMEE concluded that the incident had likely been caused by a deeply buried anti-tank mine, which had remained undetected during the demining process but moved towards the surface as a result of changing weather conditions.

16. At the same time, it should be noted that the humanitarian mine action situation in the Temporary Security Zone improved over the reporting period. Training of humanitarian demining teams continued in collaboration with the Eritrean Mine Action Programme, the National Eritrean Training Centre and the non-governmental Eritrean Demining Agency. The Mine Action Coordination Centre and international non-governmental organizations assisted in this training programme, and additional mine action teams were deployed to the Zone. Currently, 800 Eritrean personnel work in the Zone, organized in 14 manual clearance teams, five mechanical clearance teams, nine explosive ordnance disposal and survey units, and one explosive detection dog team.

17. From 1 June to 31 August 2001, mine-clearance teams set up by the Eritrean Demining Agency, the HALO Trust, the Danish Demining Group and the Danish Church Aid cleared 2,697,136 square metres of minefield and battlefield areas in the Temporary Security Zone and marked an additional 436,000 square metres of minefields. The ordnance disposal teams of these organizations destroyed 23 anti-tank mines, 627 anti-personnel mines and 10,086 unexploded ordnance.

18. Complementing the humanitarian mine action efforts, the Slovak and Bangladeshi military demining units of UNMEE continued to probe routes and clear key operational sites in Sectors West and Centre. A joint Slovak-Kenyan military demining company has been formed and operates in Sector East. UNMEE contingent ordnance disposal teams destroyed several anti-tank and anti-personnel mines and 1,925 unexploded ordnance. From 1 June to 31 August, UNMEE demining units also cleared 151 kilometres of road and 1,300,020 square metres of operational sites.

19. In close cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and national and international non-governmental organizations, UNMEE has expanded mine awareness programmes for the local

population of the Temporary Security Zone and its adjacent areas. Mine awareness information has been developed for broadcast on the Eritrean radio, and special posters and other information material have been produced in large numbers and distributed in local communities. During the reporting period, 30 personnel from national and international non-governmental organizations have been trained as mine awareness facilitators, and around 18,000 persons throughout the Temporary Security Zone attended mine awareness sessions.

20. The UNMEE budget continues to provide for the core staff and equipment of the Mine Action Coordination Centre to enable it to carry out its coordination role, technical advice and information management. Furthermore, the Centre, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has taken a proactive role in the development of national capacities to ensure that the necessary resources are mobilized to deal with the current mine threat. The Centre also strives to ascertain that sufficient sustainable capacity is available in the medium term, in order to ensure a smooth transition of mine action activities to a post-Mission environment.

IV. Boundary Commission and Claims Commission

21. Since my last report, the composition of the Boundary Commission and of the Claims Commission, established in accordance with the Peace Agreement concluded between Eritrea and Ethiopia in Algiers on 12 December 2000 (A/55/686-S/2000/1183, annex), has been completed. The two vacancies, caused by the resignation of one Commissioner on each of the commissions, have been filled. Information on the main activities of the Boundary Commission since my last report, provided by its President, is contained in annex I to this report.

22. So far, the Boundary Commission's activities continue to be financed from the Trust Fund for the Delimitation and Demarcation of the Border established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1177 (1998) and from the disbursements received from the parties. Thus far, the parties have made initial contributions towards the expenses of the Commission, which requested them to make a second contribution. Voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund, received and pledged from various Member States, currently represent a total of over $5.4 million. I would like to express my appreciation to those Member States which have generously heeded my appeal to contribute to the Fund, and to reiterate my call to the parties to meet their obligation to bear the cost of the Boundary Commission.

V. Humanitarian developments

Return of internally displaced persons and refugees

23. As a result of the effective patrolling conducted by the military component of UNMEE, the return of civilian administration, police and militia to the Zone, as well as the continued efforts of the humanitarian community, security conditions in the Temporary Security Zone have improved. This has led to the return of internally displaced persons previously accommodated in camps in the Gash Barka and Debub zones. To date, a total of 170,000 such persons have returned to their villages in the Zone, with the assistance of the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Committee and international humanitarian agencies.

24. However, a total of 70,000 persons still live in consolidated or newly established temporary camps, as their home areas remain inaccessible owing to the presence of mines and unexploded ordnance, insecurity caused by the close proximity of villages to the southern boundary of the Temporary Security Zone, or the fact that some villages are located in areas currently under Ethiopian administration. With regard to the latter, the Ethiopian authorities have agreed in principle that Eritrean internally displaced persons can return to those villages. However, the details and procedures for their return still need to be defined.

25. Since the majority of internally displaced persons have now returned to their home areas, the attention of the humanitarian community in Ethiopia and Eritrea is focused on providing emergency and reconstruction assistance. With the heavy rains of the last two months, shelter materials have become a priority for returning Eritrean internally displaced persons. United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Committee have therefore initiated programmes to provide housing materials to some of the worst affected villages. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the

support of the Government of the Netherlands, has initiated a pilot project to rehabilitate 2,000 houses in Tsorona and 1,000 in Senafe, both in Sector Centre. Water and sanitation are also among the priorities of the humanitarian community; UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and several non-governmental organizations are actively involved in the water sector. A number of agencies, including UNICEF, are also actively participating in school reconstruction and in the supply of school equipment and education materials.

26. While the health of returning internally displaced persons is relatively good, there is a concern that it could deteriorate in areas where medical and water facilities have been damaged or destroyed. United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations are working closely with the Eritrean Ministry of Health to provide basic health-care services in these areas and to rehabilitate, re-equip, and re-staff local health centres in the Temporary Security Zone.

27. While efforts are being made to improve the agriculture sector, its output in 2001 will not reach pre-conflict levels. As a result, many people in both countries will continue to require food aid until next year's harvest.

28. The voluntary repatriation of Eritrean refugees from the Sudan has been temporarily slowed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as a result of the impassability of many roads because of heavy rains. It is expected that major repatriation convoys will resume in September. In the meantime, preparations are under way to facilitate the voluntary repatriation from camps in the Port Sudan area, where some 4,000 Eritrean refugees are currently living. To date, a total of 20,984 refugees have been repatriated from the Sudan, out of 62,000 persons who were expected to return in 2001.

29. Contributions to the United Nations Consolidated Appeal for Eritrea now stand at approximately 56 per cent, an increase since June 2001. Although this is encouraging, additional food aid pledges for victims of natural disasters and internally displaced persons are urgently needed for both Ethiopia and Eritrea, and there are still significant shortfalls in all the non-food sectors. Emergency interventions, as well as major rehabilitation and reconstruction initiatives, must be undertaken for returning internally displaced persons in Ethiopia and Eritrea. I therefore urge donors to respond to the appeals made by United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations for these programmes. In view of the continuing humanitarian needs related to displacement of the populations and drought, the United Nations Country Teams in Ethiopia and Eritrea will launch consolidated appeals for the year of 2002 in November 2001.

Release and repatriation of prisoners of war

30. The release and repatriation of prisoners of war have come to a halt, despite the commitment made by both Governments under article 2, paragraph 1, of the Peace Agreement of 12 December 2000, which stipulated that "the parties shall without delay release and repatriate all prisoners of war". According to figures provided by ICRC, approximately 1,800 prisoners of war remain in Ethiopia and 400 in Eritrea.

Quick-impact projects

31. In line with the recommendations contained in the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809), $700,000 was included in the UNMEE regular budget for quick-impact projects designed to make a difference in the lives of people in the Mission area. Over the last six months, UNMEE, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, government Ministries and local administrations have submitted projects covering activities related to water, sanitation, education, health and social services.

32. The quick-impact projects of UNMEE cover the Temporary Security Zone, its adjacent areas and some other conflict-affected areas in both Eritrea and Ethiopia. Their cost ranges from as little as $100 to a maximum of $15,000. The Quick-Impact Projects Committee has approved 15 projects in Ethiopia and 28 in Eritrea. These projects have allowed UNMEE to assist a number of war-affected groups in the two countries, and have helped to establish a closer relationship between UNMEE units at the field level, local administrations and communities.

33. As the initial allocation of $700,000 is expected to be exhausted soon, the creation of the special Trust Fund to Support the Peace Process in Ethiopia and Eritrea was approved with effect from 16 July this year. The Fund would enable UNMEE to continue to support quick-impact projects for emergency reconstruction programmes and confidence-building efforts in the

Temporary Security Zone and adjacent areas in both countries.

VI. Human rights

34. During the reporting period, ICRC assisted the repatriation of 3,522 persons of Ethiopian descent from Eritrea. Those repatriated included individuals held in detention centres for periods from several weeks to up to seven months, reportedly on national security concerns. They also included persons with expired residence documentation and families who, forced by adverse circumstances, "opted" for repatriation. Since December 2000, a total of 19,853 persons have been repatriated to Ethiopia.

35. On 25 June 2001, a group of 704 persons of Eritrean descent, mostly long-term residents of the Tigray region in Ethiopia, were sent to Eritrea without the assistance of ICRC. The latter withdrew from the process when it became clear that the manner in which these repatriations were carried out was not in accordance with international humanitarian law.

36. By a letter dated 6 July 2001, UNMEE protested to the Government of Ethiopia the circumstances of these repatriations. The Mission recalled that under article 2, paragraph 3, of the Peace Agreement of 12 December 2000, the parties committed themselves to "afford humane treatment to each other's nationals and persons of each other's national origin within their respective territories". In a letter dated 2 August 2001 addressed to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Mr. Meles Zenawi, I expressed my concern over the circumstances under which these repatriations took place. I stressed that repatriations should be carried out with full respect for international human rights and humanitarian law, and in accordance with the Peace Agreement. In its reply dated 8 August 2001 to the Mission's letter of 6 July 2001, the Government of Ethiopia maintained that the persons were repatriated to Eritrea of their own free will, after the competent authorities "ascertained that the individuals did surrender their Ethiopian nationalities in favour of an Eritrean one in accordance with the Ethiopian law".

37. As part of its monitoring of the treatment of Ethiopians in Eritrea and Eritreans in Ethiopia, UNMEE conducted interviews with individuals repatriated by both countries. Several serious human rights concerns emerged from information gathered during these interviews, including the issue of long-term detention, without due process and often under poor conditions; allegations of ill-treatment; discrimination in access to social services and employment; and harassment by civilians and officials. In many cases the repatriations have resulted in family separations, as families were not able to leave together or, in the cases of families of mixed parentage, were not able to remain together in the same country. In some cases, repatriated individuals of mixed parentage were left stateless, as the country to which they were repatriated did not grant them its nationality.

38. UNMEE has been carrying out human rights monitoring activities within the Temporary Security Zone and its adjacent areas, and has investigated a number of allegations that soldiers or militia have abducted or arrested individuals of the other nationality and held them for short periods. In some cases, the allegations have been confirmed. Those detained often state that they are questioned about the activities of the military, militia and police in the area and are sometimes ill-treated.

39. I should like again to appeal to both Ethiopia and Eritrea to reconsider their respective positions on the eviction of each other's nationals. These evictions have been the source of great suffering and emotional distress for those affected. I urge the parties strictly to comply with international human rights and humanitarian law standards, as well as with their commitments under the Peace Agreement of 12 December 2000.

VII. Public information

40. UNMEE continues to actively explain the Mission's mandate, report on the peace process, and address the most pressing concerns of returning internally displaced persons, with particular focus on awareness of mines and unexploded ordnance. In addition to its regular radio programme, UNMEE produces leaflets and other printed material and a monthly newsletter, and regularly provides photographic and television news material through an international agency based in Nairobi.

41. The public information section of the Mission conducts regular press briefings in both capitals, arranges interviews and facilitates access to the Temporary Security Zone for members of the media.

UNMEE also brought together journalists from Ethiopia and Eritrea in an effort to build confidence between the populations of the two countries. The first such event took place on 7 July 2001, on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the Mereb River Bridge donated by the Government of the Netherlands, and then at a joint Ethiopian-Eritrean press conference held on 9 August, also on the Mereb River Bridge. Such confidence-building measures are all the more essential as the press in both countries has been engaged in inflammatory reporting. It should be recalled that I particularly addressed this issue during my visit to UNMEE in December of 2000 and in my previous reports to the Security Council.

42. It is my hope that agreement will soon be reached with the Ethiopian authorities that would allow UNMEE to broadcast its weekly radio programmes. In the meantime, its programme continues to be broadcast on the Eritrean Radio and is posted by the Department of Public Information on the United Nations web site in English and six local languages (Amharic, Arabic, Afar Oromo, Tigre, Ethiopian-Tigrinya and Eritrean-Tigrinya).

VIII. Confidence-building measures

43. UNMEE continues to facilitate confidence-building measures aimed at improving relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Such measures have become an important aspect of UNMEE efforts to consolidate peace between the two countries, and the Mission is pursuing all possible avenues in this regard. In this connection, UNMEE is pursuing a strategy to encourage direct interaction between the peoples of both countries, such as the joint Ethiopian-Eritrean press conference mentioned in paragraph 41 above.

44. With regard to the Ethiopian and Eritrean religious leaders referred to in my last report to the Security Council (S/2001/608, para. 51), my Special Representative has maintained contact with them and encouraged them to make their plans to hold a joint meeting become a reality. Discussions have also taken place within the Military Coordination Commission on how to use that forum to promote confidence-building measures with regard to security issues.

IX. HIV/AIDS awareness and training

45. In a major United Nations effort to address human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) issues within peacekeeping operations, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Department if Peacekeeping Operations signed a cooperation framework in January 2001, outlining the areas of cooperation in this crucial field. UNMEE also established a joint HIV/AIDS Task Force with the participation of representatives from the Eritrean National AIDS Control Programme, the Health Service of the Eritrean Defence Forces and UNAIDS. The Task Force developed the UNMEE HIV/AIDS Programme, which aims at promoting an awareness and prevention campaign and developing further cooperation between UNMEE and the Eritrean Defence Forces to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS.

46. From 23 to 28 July, UNMEE, together with UNAIDS, organized the first joint UNMEE-Eritrean Defence Forces HIV/AIDS "Training of Trainers" course. The 25 participants included 13 representatives from the Eritrean Defence Forces and 12 UNMEE representatives from four contingents, as well as UNMEE force headquarters. The course, which was aimed at preparing trainers for UNMEE contingents and the Eritrean Defence Forces, was well received by the participants who, in turn, have followed up with training courses in their contingents. The training topics included basic facts on HIV/AIDS, the understanding of risk behaviour, as well as learning and teaching methods for adults. Preparations by UNMEE are under way for the implementation of a similar programme in Ethiopia.

X. Financial aspects

47. The General Assembly, by its resolution 55/252 B of 14 June 2001, authorized me to enter into initial commitments for UNMEE in the amount of $90 million covering the period from 1 July to 31 December 2001, pending submission of my proposed budget for the Mission for the full 2001-2002 financial period during the main part of the fifty-sixth session of the Assembly. Therefore, should the Security Council approve my recommendations set out in paragraph 58 below regarding the extension of the mandate of UNMEE, the Mission's initial resource requirements for the financial

period 2001-2002 would be met from within the commitment authority granted to me by the General Assembly. As at 31 July 2001, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNMEE special account amounted to $158.9 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to $3,466.9 million.

XI. Observations

48. UNMEE was established in its present configuration by the Security Council on 15 September 2000 (resolution 1320 (2000)). The three-month period under review, which completes the first year of the Mission's operations, has seen the gradual consolidation of the progress achieved previously. While the past 12 months have not been without difficulties, there are still grounds for satisfaction. The Mission's approach of steadily addressing the problems of the implementation of the peace process has yielded results.

49. With the submission of the UNMEE final map to the parties, the Temporary Security Zone, which was formally established by the Mission in April 2001, is now operational. While the two Governments have not formally accepted the map, their de facto respect for its parameters on the ground augurs well. For the first time in three years, the armies of Ethiopia and Eritrea have been fully separated and some of their soldiers are beginning to return home. The majority of internally displaced persons have also returned to their homes inside the Temporary Security Zone, and the processes of rehabilitation and reconstruction have begun. Fields that had remained untended are being ploughed, and everywhere people are seeking to rebuild their lives. The commitment to peace demonstrated by the parties has made this possible, and the same commitment must carry Ethiopia and Eritrea forward to the definitive resolution of their border dispute.

50. However, several outstanding issues remain, and the parties' cooperation in resolving them is crucial. As indicated in my previous reports, it is essential that both Governments grant UNMEE, in accordance with the universally established practice in peacekeeping operations, unimpeded and unconditional freedom of movement, including in the areas adjacent to the Temporary Security Zone. It is also essential that they agree to the establishment of the most direct high altitude flights between Asmara and Addis Ababa. Since the release and repatriation of prisoners of war is a fundamental aspect of the peace process, both parties are also strongly urged to resume and rapidly complete the unconditional release of prisoners of war. In addition, nationals of both Ethiopia and Eritrea should be allowed to remain, without any discrimination, in the locations where they have decided to settle.

51. As regards the status-of-forces agreement, it is regrettable that the Government of Eritrea has not yet agreed to sign it, despite my repeated appeals and the fact that the Security Council, in resolution 1320 (2000), requested that the status-of-forces agreement be concluded in October 2000. It should be recalled that the Government of Ethiopia signed the agreement on 22 March 2001. Also, the letter and spirit of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities and the Protocol Agreement on Militia and Police should be strictly respected to ensure that the Temporary Security Zone is effectively demilitarized. For its part, Ethiopia is expected to cooperate with UNMEE in ensuring that the Mission has the necessary access to all minefield information.

52. During the summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Lusaka in July 2001, I had the opportunity to meet separately with Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia and President Isaias Afwerki of Eritrea to discuss the status of the peace process and the difficulties mentioned in the above paragraphs. In similar letters addressed to both leaders on 2 August 2001, I once again shared with them my concerns in this regard and I urged them to ensure that their Governments cooperate closely with UNMEE, in order to resolve the outstanding problems. I wish to reiterate the importance of such cooperation for the implementation of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities.

53. The precarious humanitarian conditions prevailing in both countries, in particular the lack of food security and the need for emergency relief assistance, remain a source of concern. I therefore reiterate my call to the international donor community to respond generously to the United Nations Country Teams' consolidated appeals for humanitarian assistance for Ethiopia and Eritrea. I also urge donors to support the humanitarian assistance activities of UNMEE through contributions to the newly established Trust Fund.

54. As reflected in paragraph 15 above, the presence of mines and unexploded ordnance remains a major

threat to UNMEE and the civilian population. The generous contributions provided by some Member States through the Voluntary Trust Fund for Mine Action managed by the Mine Action Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, and through other mechanisms, are therefore very much appreciated. However, underfunding seriously hinders the United Nations capacity to train, equip and deploy humanitarian demining personnel with appropriate supervision. I urge those countries that are in a position to do so to contribute generously to these activities.

55. My appreciation also goes to the Member States that have provided voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the Delimitation and Demarcation of the Border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. At the same time, I would like to reiterate my appeal to the parties, as well as to donors, to make further contributions to this Trust Fund, and to ensure the successful work of the Boundary Commission.

56. The devastating war between Ethiopia and Eritrea cost massive human life and severely damaged the economies of both countries. The bitterness and tragedy of this conflict continue to affect the relationship between Ethiopia and Eritrea and prevent the resolution of many pending issues. Despite this, the people of the two countries clearly yearn to rebuild their lives in peace and to renew the ties they had enjoyed before the war broke out. Needless to say that the United Nations will continue to assist both parties in engaging in confidence-building activities, in order to foster trust between them at various levels.

57. In the meantime, some political developments in both countries have given rise to anxieties that they could impact on the peace process. I trust, however, that both Governments will continue to act in accordance with the wishes of their people for lasting peace.

58. The progress achieved in the past year is a tribute to both Governments' commitment to peace, and to the common vision and action of the Member States involved, in particular the facilitators and guarantors of the Algiers Agreements, the Security Council and the troop-contributing nations. During the reporting period, UNMEE has continued to cooperate closely with the Organization of African Unity (OAU). While my Special Representative and I have maintained close political contact with the OAU, UNMEE has enjoyed a similar degree of cooperation at the military level both in the field and within the Military Coordination Commission, where the OAU is represented. I am confident that the progress achieved in the peace process can be sustained, with the continued involvement of UNMEE. In this context, I recommend that the mandate of UNMEE be extended for six months, until 15 March 2002.

59. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to my Special Representative and to all military and civilian personnel of UNMEE for their tireless efforts towards the consolidation of peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea. I would also like to express my gratitude for the invaluable support UNMEE has received from the OAU and the Member States assisting in this process.

Annex I

Eritrea/Ethiopia Boundary Commission

Second report on the work of the Commission

1. The present report provides an update on developments since my report of 29 May 2001 (S/2001/608, annex I).

2. The composition of the Commission has now been completed by the appointment by Eritrea of Professor Michael Reisman, announced on 12 June 2001.

3. This enabled the Commission to adopt on 20 June 2001, and communicate to the Parties, its Rules of Procedure.

4. In accordance with the schedule prescribed in article 16, paragraph 2, of these Rules, the Parties filed their Memorials, accompanied by annexes, on 30 June 2001. The Counter-Memorials are due to be filed not later than 22 September 2001.

5. On 16 July 2001, the President held an informal meeting with the representatives of the Parties in order to discuss various matters relating to the ongoing work of the Commission.

6. The Secretary has been requested to prepare large-scale and up-to-date maps essential for use initially in the delimitation and thereafter the demarcation process. Arrangements to this end are being made.

7. The Parties have duly made their initial contributions towards the expenses of the Commission. They have since been requested to make a second contribution.

(*Signed*) Sir Elihu **Lauterpacht**
President of the Commission

30 August 2001

Annex II

United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea: Contributions as at 31 August 2001

	Military observers	*Staff officers*	*NSE**	*Troops*	*Total*
Algeria	8				8
Australia		2			2
Austria	3	4			7
Bangladesh	6	6		160	172
Benin	5	3			8
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8				8
Bulgaria	4	2			6
Canada	6				6
China	5				5
Croatia	5				5
Czech Republic	2				2
Denmark	4	2			6
Finland	7	2			9
France		2	3	192	197
Gambia	4	2			6
Ghana	11	7			18
Greece	2				2
India	5	18		1 304	1 327
Ireland		2			2
Italy	3	7		128	138
Jordan	6	16		943	965
Kenya	11	13		600	624
Malaysia	7	5			12
Namibia	3	2			5
Nepal	4				4
Netherlands	1	6			7
Nigeria	6	4			10
Norway	5				5
Paraguay	2				2
Peru	2				2
Poland	6				6
Romania	8				8
Russian Federation	6				6
Singapore	2				2
Slovakia		4	2	199	205

	Military observers	*Staff officers*	*NSE**	*Troops*	*Total*
South Africa	5	2			7
Spain	3	2			5
Sweden	8				8
Switzerland	4				4
Tunisia	3	3			6
Ukraine	6				6
United Republic of Tanzania	7	3			10
United States of America	6	1			7
Uruguay	6				6
Zambia	10	4			14
Total	**215**	**124**	**5**	**3 526**	**3 870**

* National support element.